```
VZCZCXYZ0023
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLC #0598 2621353
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 191353Z SEP 06
FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9333
INFO RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0722
RUEHKI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 1327
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 0368
RUEHNJ/AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA 0398
RUEHLU/AMEMBASSY LUANDA 0929
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0831
```

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 000598

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/19/2016
TAGS: PREL PGOV OIIP OPRC GB EK
SUBJECT: PRESS ACCUSES INTERIOR MINISTER OF TREASON AFTER
BOUNDARY NEGOTIATIONS FAIL

REF: LIBREVILLE 580

Classified By: CDA Katherine Dhanani. Reason: 1.4 (b).

¶1. (U) Gabonese Minister of State for the Interior Andre Mba
Obame has been under heavy attack by Libreville media since
the failure of his effort to promote a Gabon-EG boundary
agreement (reftel). On September 13 the
government-controlled daily newspaper Union carried a rare
front-page editorial accusing an unnamed minister of
encouraging President Bongo to give Mbanie Island to
Equatorial Guinea in exchange for money, an act the newspaper
considered tantamount to treason. Independent papers have
been more direct, naming Mba Obame and demanding that he be
fired. The September 18 edition of Le Crocodile, an obscure
biweekly paper, included the US Department of State as a
conspirator. In Le Crocodile's version of history, both
State (acting to further the interests of US oil companies)
and the GREG paid Mba Obame to trick Bongo into giving up
Mbanie Island.

¶2. (C) Comment: This kind of direct attack in the Union on a
regime insider is extremely unusual, and it is generally
thought to reflect President Bongo's anger over the insult of
Obiang's September 8 visit. Mba Obame is considered an Ali
Bongo ally, and the President's ire may have been enflamed by
Presidential advisors seeking to weaken Ali. While politics
may have motivated the criticism of Mba Obame, the prominence
of the issue even further reduces the likelihood the GoG
would accept a negotiated resolution of the boundary dispute
that gives Mbanie to EG.
DHANANI